



Celebrating 20 years of tree planting!

Newsletter
Spring 2019

Moor Trees

creating native woodland

Director Adam Owen on the joys of spring and other good things!



Welcome to another Moor Trees newsletter. Spring is here and it is certainly one of the most exciting times of year for me. To see the bright yellows of celandines and primrose, the flush of dog's mercury and broad leaves of the lords-and-ladies bursting from the woodland floor are always signs of nature awakening for a new year.

The winter has passed and it has been another very successful season of tree planting. Over 1200 trees were planted at Hillcrest, Longdown and over 5000 at Upcott Grange Farm, Broadwoodwidge. We managed to avoid the snow, with the exception of one day, but recent weeks have seen volunteers valiantly planting trees in freezing rain; thankfully without the mud experienced last winter. We are now approaching the planting of our 100,000 tree! (see page 8)

Following on from our last newsletter I'm pleased to report that the Environment Agency planted their first trees as part of the Dartmoor Headwaters project; and our tree growing programme in response to the Woodland Trust's request to supply them with trees is off to good start (see page 7). This year we have collected more tree seed than ever before, with over 38,000 acorns and a total of 140 kg of tree seed! Moor Trees is now part of the 'UK Sourced and Grown Assurance Scheme' (UKSG) and we will be able to supply trees to those landowners with schemes of less than 3 hectares at a much subsidised price. Contact us for more details.

We were very grateful to be the chosen charity of two young men from Portwrinkle who have taken it upon themselves to kayak in the world's toughest canoe race this Easter 2019: the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race. They will be kayaking non-stop for 125 miles and raising funds for Moor Trees (see page 2). Any monies raised will go directly into tree production and helping increase woodland in Devon.

This newsletter follows Moor Trees celebrating being 20 years old. We had a fabulous ceremony at Hillcrest which saw founders, members old and new as well as our patrons come together. A poem was dedicated to our work by Marchant Barron, the talent and name behind The Marchant Barron Prize in Creative Writing annually awarded at Bristol Grammar School. His work has been featured nationally including at Westonbirt Arboretum. (see pages 4 and 5)

I mentioned the beauty of spring flowers, but perhaps more importantly are our ancient meadows and I am pleased that Moor Trees is supporting the work of Moor Meadows, a community initiative of farmers and landowners who are helping these threatened habitats. You can read about their work on page 6.

All the best,

Adam

**Moor Trees
20th
anniversary
edition!**

Membership

As reported at the last AGM, from 1st April membership fees are being increased (see panel right). Note the new Joint membership for two persons living in the same property. Also we will be sending out membership cards. This will entitle members to a discount at Cotswold stores and also a 15% discount on trees purchased from Moor Trees.

Look out for our Member's Day when we will be visiting a Moor Trees' planting site and having a social!

Individual	£20
Low income	£10
Joint	£26
Family	£30
Lifetime	£200

Kayaking 125 miles to plant trees in Devon!

Two young men from Portwrinkle have taken it upon themselves to kayak in the world's toughest canoe race this Easter 2019: the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race. They will be kayaking non-stop for 125 miles from Devizes to Westminster, racing against some of the best endurance kayakers in the world. And whilst they are doing this they are raising funds for Moor Trees. Their target is £12,500.



Doug and Tim visited Moor Trees volunteers on one of our planting days at Upcott Grange Farm.

Doug Reid and Tim Baker will be paddling a two-man K2 racing kayak nonstop, which is likely to take around 24 hours. Lord Paddy Ashdown, who won the folding boat class during his time as a Royal Marine, said about the race: 'It was crippling. We took 25 hours to finish the course, and I can only think of one person in history who has spent a worst Easter'.

To complicate matters, Doug and Tim first stepped into a racing kayak in September and spent the first half of the winter upside down, capsized and taking long cold swims. Thankfully they have the help of first class coaches and team at Fowey River Canoe Club and are now climbing the ranks in the training races.



Doug at the Moor Trees 20th anniversary party.

As for the trees, Doug says: 'We first heard of Moor Trees at a George Monbiot talk at Plymouth University a few years ago. Loving the great outdoors we feel planting native woodland to protect our planet, our corner of England, is exceptionally valuable'. Tim adds: 'We are part of Babcock's 800-strong engineering design team. Many of the woodlands in Devon were felled in the last century to create ships and so working with such a history of ship building and enjoying being on water, there seems a natural connection between us and fundraising to plant trees locally'.

Director of Moor Trees, Adam Owen, says: 'Moor Trees is very grateful to Doug and Tim for choosing our charity to support. As a woodland charity our volunteers have planted over 90,000 trees across and around Dartmoor. Any monies raised will go directly into tree production and helping increase woodland in Devon.'

With only a few days to go they hope to raise £12,500 and may also win the Pfeiffer Trophy which is awarded to the crew raising the largest amount of money.

Follow their story at <https://www.moortrees.org/fundraisers/>, on Facebook at [@moortreesdw](https://www.facebook.com/moortreesdw) or on instagram at [moortreesdw](https://www.instagram.com/moortreesdw).



Doug and Tim are better practiced with a paddle than a spade!

To sponsor Tim and Doug follow the link on the Moor Trees website or visit their 'go fund me' page:

<https://www.gofundme.com/paddling-125-miles-to-create-native-woodland>

Why Moor Trees? The Early Years - Adam Griffin



Now that Moor Trees is twenty years old, founder member Adam Griffin recalls the circumstances and inspirations that led to the formation of Moor Trees.

I picked up the phone. "Hi, my name's Chris Layton," said the caller. It was May 1997...

I was working as a volunteer for the Silvanus Trust (an organisation for regenerating native woodland) in Tiverton and had just returned from a trip to the highlands of Scotland leading tree planting volunteers for the charity Trees for Life.

"Alan Featherstone - the director of Trees for Life - told me that you were interested in setting up a similar organisation," Chris continued.

I'd been volunteering and working for Trees For Life since 1991 and fundraising for them in Devon. Their vision of regenerating the Caledonian Forest in the North West Highlands sparked both Chris's and my imaginations and we contemplated how large scale native woodland regeneration on Dartmoor could also be possible.

Our inspiration was the old wildwood that stretched out across Britain after the last ice age: a mosaic of habitats nestled amongst large tracts of deciduous forest exemplified by the ancient woodlands of Dartmoor such as Wistman's Wood and Piles Copse. These two woods in particular are still tiny fragments and in the late 1990s showed evidence of over-grazing, suppressing any naturally regenerating trees. Indeed it was this overgrazing of Dartmoor that spurred our interest in a landscape that could be more 'wild'. Chris and I invited others who were also interested in these ideas to form a working group and Moor Trees was born.

We explored these lofty ideas at Moor Trees first conference in 1999, called 'Towards the Wild' held at Dartington Hall, which began a long and hard debate with others on 're-wilding' on Dartmoor. We then gradually focused on a model which could deliver more achievable, modest scale planting in order to develop a track record for the charity.

Over the next three years Moor Trees became a charity and we grew and planted our first oaks. From the start Chris Layton and I decided that it needed to be a community organisation and we regularly gathered as a group in many different shapes and sizes to discuss ideas, share stories and develop support for practical events.

Our first major planting and regeneration site on Scorriton Down in 2002 allowed me to set out my ideas and methods of imitating natural regeneration, which I'd developed with Trees For Life in Glen Affric. Hundreds of volunteers planted nearly 3000 trees that winter in tough weather conditions, it was the beginning of many wet and wonderful stories of Moor Trees volunteering.



The first ever Moor Trees planting site at Scorriton Down on Dartmoor

Those early days of camaraderie, tea, cake and organised random planting, left a blueprint for the future which is still being followed today.



Volunteers plant the first tree on Scorriton Down. By Chris Smith

MOOR TREES planted its first tree as part of our ongoing planting scheme on Scorriton Down (just north of Ashburton). Over 2 days during National Tree Week last November, a group of volunteers erected 13 small fence enclosures and planted 120 native trees within them. The small fences of no more than 3 metres wide were put up to exclude Red deer, using fencing techniques that originate in the Highlands of Scotland. A BIG thank you to all the volunteers (you know who you are) and to the landowner Phillipa Baker of Deer Force 10 for asking us to do the work and helping us to get started in restoring areas of Wild, Natural Forest on Dartmoor (albeit small area).

An extract from an early Moor Trees newsletter (Adam, crouched with spade)

20 trees for 20 years - Moor Trees is 20 years young!

It was fantastic to see so many of our friends join us for our 20th anniversary celebrations held in March!

About 40 people gathered at Richard and Kate Morley's at Hillcrest in Longdown, where we recently finished planting over 4500 trees. Many of our founders, patrons, landowners, volunteers, staff and trustees came along to help us plant 20 trees, eat cake and make merry.



Director Adam Owen gives an introductory speech.

After chit-chat over coffee and an introductory speech by Adam, we planted the trees - one of each species that Moor Trees grows and plants out to create woodlands. They will form a large crescent and in the future, people will be able to walk round and see the diversity of our native trees, each one with a name plaque.



Old friends Kevin Cox, chair of the RSPB with landowner and conservation expert Derek Gow planting the oak tree.

Marchant Barron, the poet, had written a beautiful poem, 'Beginnings' especially for the occasion which was read out after the tree planting. The poem was also engraved on a plaque that will sit with the trees, reminding everyone that our work is the beginnings of

new native woodlands – the ancient forests of the future.



Marchant Barron, left, listening to his poem being read out

Then our attention turned to the awaiting feast made by our hard working caterer Sonja (The Seasoned Kitchen) - plates of rice and chicken and stir fried vegetables, eaten whilst sat round a warming fire.



Eating and chatting round a warming fire

Next it was time to cut the celebratory cake - a four layered sponge!



Two Moor Trees patrons cutting the celebratory cake—Kevin Cox and Stephan Harding, head of holistic science at Schumacher College

We also had great fun examining Tim Baker's and Doug Reid's kayak that they will soon be doing the 125 mile Devizes to Westminster race in to raise funds for Moor Trees (see page 2). We salute them!



Tim Reid and Doug Baker with the Kayak that they will be using in the Devizes to Westminster race this Easter

It was especially lovely to see many of the founder members who started Moor Trees 20 years ago. It was lovely to think they sowed the seeds (literally!) of what we are today. So many thanks to those visionaries: including Chris Smith, Stephen Tame, Fiona Parr, Angela McTieran, Chris Curry, Adam Griffin and Chris Layton (see page 3 for Adam Griffin's account of the early years).

Thanks also to our patrons, for their continued support and promotion of Moor Trees - Sir Jonathon Porritt, Alan Watson Featherstone, Stephan Harding, Satish Kumar, Pen Hadow and Kevin Cox.



Two founder members : Adam Griffin (left) and Chris Smith

If it were not for our members and volunteers, we simply would not exist. Over the years there have been many volunteers, too many to mention here, but we thank you all for your hard work, dedication, belief, and more than anything the ability to keep planting trees in the worst weather that Devon can throw at you.



We would not be able to plant trees without willing landowners such as Kate (pictured left) and Richard Morley who hosted these celebrations and on whose land we planted our 20 trees. And Derek Gow on whose land we have just completed the planting of 8000 trees. They too are visionaries and we are grateful to all of them.

We are also grateful to our collaborators, in particular our partnership with the Woodland Trust through Moor Trees' previous director, Graham Burton, which will hopefully result in many thousands of trees being planted on Dartmoor and its surroundings.

The day was a celebration of 20 years of collaboration between visionaries, volunteers, funders and landowners. Long may it continue. Happy Birthday Moor Trees!

Adam Owen and Janet Cotter

Photographs: Paul Harrison and Tim Ferry

Have you heard of Moor Meadows?

Donna Cox



In 2015 a charity was established in the Dartmoor area with complimentary aims to Moor Trees. Moor Meadows founder, Donna Cox, explains how Moor Trees and Moor Meadows can work alongside one another to promote a variety of habitats for wildlife on Dartmoor.

In a quiet corner of Dartmoor there is a growing voice, a voice promoting the restoration and creation of flower-rich grasslands across Dartmoor.

Moor Meadows is a community initiative with over 200 members, from farmers to landowners, who are helping nature under threat – wildflower species, bees, butterflies, birds, bats, beetles and much more.

The major success story has been to bring together individuals with a passion for meadows. The Meadows Email Exchange Forum was set up for meadow makers to communicate with each other. Anyone can ask a question and others in the group can provide an answer. Topics include everything from where to get seed to how to manage a meadow. It is a very active forum and several

Moor Meadows members with species-rich meadows donated wildflower seed last year for the creation of new meadows on Dartmoor (via Devon Wildlife Trust Upstream Thinking Project).

In much the same way that **Moor Trees** is restoring and replanting woodland lost to historic and modern land management practices, **Moor Meadows** seeks to protect and restore flower-rich grassland, from hay meadows to Rhos pastures, on which much of wildlife depends. Such meadows are nationally endangered habitats.

Donna Cox, co-founder of **Moor Meadows** says: 'We are not-for-profit - we just do what we do for the love of wildflower meadows. We are able to offer on-site advice

ment options and the wildlife that depends on meadows'.

Moor Trees is working with **Moor Meadows** to ensure that we do not plant woodland on what could be an ancient meadow. It is clear the two organisations have much in common, not just in name. Many of the pollinators found in flower rich meadows are also food for the birds that frequent the woodland edge!

Recently **Moor Meadows** launched their website - which includes the Dartmoor Meadows Map where meadow owners can add their meadow.

Also on the website is the Me and My Meadow section, where meadow owners tell their inspiring stories, everything from a garden meadow to many acres of meadow on a nature friendly farm.

Joining the group is free. If you have a field you would like to restore to a flowering meadow, or if you simply wish to create wild areas in your garden - gardens and orchards can be wildflower meadows too – then join the group.



A meadow full of wild flowers

to those who request it (offering basic plant surveys and management advice). Each year we provide workshops and talks so that meadow owners can learn more about the key indicator plants of species rich meadows, the manage-

For further information on how to join, events, information on meadow creation and management, or for where to visit a meadow on Dartmoor you should visit **Moor Meadows** informative website:

www.moormeadows.org.uk

Moor Trees to grow more trees!

Due to Moor Trees' expertise at producing local provenance trees, a demand has arisen from such prominent organisations as the Woodland Trust, the National Trust and the Environment Agency. This would require an increase in the number of trees we grow from around 10,000 a year to 50,000!

Moor Trees' aim is to have enough trees for our own planting sites and supply surplus trees to the Woodland Trust and other ventures, including private landowners who are interested in planting small woodland but whose funding may not come under current government grant schemes.

By supplying such trees we can bring financial stability to our charity and reduce our reliance on grants for core funding. This will enable us to focus our grant funding on providing community and conservation benefits, a scenario to be warmly welcomed.



Root trainers full of compost with an acorn in each.

How to grow so many trees? Well, in my opinion, the significant use of root trainers (or adapted plant pots) is the key to achieving this goal. Growing oak trees in this way is all about timing.

First you must prepare the root trainers, i.e. fill them with compost, before the acorn gathering season. This can be achieved with volunteer help in the late summer. Then simply collect the acorns and pot them into the root trainers straight away, cover the root trainers with leaves to emulate the forest floor and wait for the spring.



Jon covering the root trainers with leaf litter to emulate the woodland floor.

Under the safety of our new protected, raised beds our germination rate should rocket and hence also our productivity, producing far more oak seedlings than before.

In addition to the 12,000 oak trees already germinating at Dartington I will also be taking tree seedlings from Jon Covey, at the Broadley nursery, to 'pot on' into root trainers so that we end up with about 25,000 trees each at Dartington and Broadley nurseries.

This is an exciting time for Moor Trees and I am sure our wonderful band of volunteers will get behind this initiative.

Jon Brock, Woodland and Nursery Officer (Dartington)

Map showing the location of all Moor Trees' plantations on and around Dartmoor



See the back page for more details about the 90000 trees planted by Moor Trees in the last 20 years

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Registered charity number: 1081142

Our staff:

- Adam Owen (Director)
- Brian Daniel (Project Officer)
- Jon Brock (Tree & Volunteer Officer)
- Jon Covey (Broadley Nursery Officer)
- Paul Harrison (Newsletter Editor & Tree Dedications)
- Naomi Wisbey (Newsletter Co-editor)

Our trustees:

- Janet Cotter (Chair)
- Naomi Wisbey (Secretary & Treasurer)
- Tim Ferry
- Tom Murphy
- Jill Broom
- Paul Harrison
- Jon Covey

Our patrons:

- Sir Jonathon Porritt
- Stephan Harding (Schumacher College)
- Satish Kumar (*Resurgence* magazine and Schumacher College)
- Pen Hadow (Polar explorer)
- Alan Watson Featherstone (ecologist)
- Kevin Cox (RSPB)

1999 to 2019**over 90000 trees in 20 years of planting!**

2002/3 Scorrorton Down Buckfastleigh DNP SX684685 2.91 ha 4530 trees	2003/4 Hillyfield Harbourneford DNP SX719621 1.69 ha 1430 trees	2004/5 Middle Heltor Farm Dunsford DNP SX795874 2.10 ha 1129 trees	2004/5 Grimstone Manor Horrabridge DNP SX517705 0.40 ha 360 trees	2004/5 St. Anthony's Ilington DNP SX775760 0.42 ha 378 trees	2005/6 Courtgate Orchard Harbourneford DNP SX715623 4.53 ha 4595 trees
2005/7 Southcombe Barn Widecombe DNP SX713764 1.58 ha 1105 trees	2006/7 Coombe Barton Bickleigh SX516623 1.69 ha 1325 trees	2006/7 Dean Burn Buckfastleigh DNP SX695664 4.06 ha 2785 trees	2006/7 Lemon Wood Haytor Vale BNP SX771757 9.82 ha 5126 trees	2007/8 Monkswell House Horrabridge DNP SX518707 0.24 ha 230 trees	2007/8 Southway Farm Widecombe DNP SX725767 0.32 ha 430 trees
2007/8 Central Park Plymouth SX474560 0.55 ha 527 trees	2007/8 Wedlake Peter Tavy DNP SX537773 1.90 ha 1795 trees	2007/9 Sharpham Estate South Hams SX810585 2.79 ha 2838 trees	2009/10 Various small sites including Dartmouth School & Broadley 0.50 ha 400 trees	2009/10 Burlands South Brent DNP SX693519 1.24 ha 1171 trees	2009/10 Bear Wood Nr. Chudleigh SX852797 4.79 ha 3967 trees
2009/11 HMP Dartmoor Princetown DNP SX5877742 1.00 ha 896 trees	2010/11 Soussons & Penlee Postbridge DNP SX 683 790 1.11 ha 1243 trees	2010/11 Penlee Farm Postbridge DNP SX 653 784 0.50 ha 2500 trees	2010/11 Doug's Hillyfield Harbourneford DNP SX723623 2.24 ha 2580 trees	2011/12 Horner's Tongue Morleigh SX 758 542 0.50 ha 400 trees	2011/12 Badworthy South Brent DNP SX 684 616 1.80 ha 1800 trees
2011/12 Various small site (Ben's, Torview, Burlands) 1.00 ha 1000 trees	2011/12 Ben's Wood Ashburton DNP SX752700 1.01 ha 973 trees	2011/12 Horseshoe Paddock Stokeinteignhead SX914712 0.40ha 658 trees	2011/13 HMP Dartmoor DNP SX587742 1.50 ha 1200 trees	2012/13 Mill Lane Kingkerswell SX887677 0.63 ha 390 trees	2012/13 Rexon Meadows Lifton SX410882 0.90 ha 1175 trees
2012/13 Various small sites 0.60 ha 1000 trees	2013/14 The Barn South Milton SX680416 1.60 ha 1050 trees	2013/14 Throwleigh DNP SX668908 1.00 ha 440 trees	2013/14 Howton Down Year 1 SX 828 733 3.70 ha 4430 trees	2014/15 Howton Down Year 2 SX 827 494 4.20 ha 4174 trees	2014/15 Ennaton Farm Ugborough SX685 563 0.40 ha 500 trees
2014/15 Deancombe DNP SX 723 644 1.00 ha 822 trees	2015/16 Various small sites 0.30 ha 381 trees	2015/16 Howton Down Year 3 SX 825 732 3.70 ha 4000 trees	2015/16 Slapton Drewsteignton DNP SX 819 452 0.30 ha 320 trees	2015/16 Various small sites 1.00 ha 950 trees	2016/17 Weir Mill, Drewsteignton DNP SX 774 899 3.20 ha 3800 trees
2016/17 Wigford Brook,, Wigford SX 727 513 1.20 ha 1234 trees	2016/17 Scorrorton Down Buckfastleigh DNP SX 682 684 1.00 ha 1000 trees	2016/17 Hennock DNP SX 825 809 1.00 ha 1025 trees	2016/17 Various small sites 0.500 ha 635 trees	2017/18 Upcott Grange Farm Broadwoodwidge SX 384 916 1.80 ha 2290 trees	2017/18 Bidlake Manor Bridestowe SX 495 887 1.10 ha 1300 trees
2017/18 Hillcrest Longdown SX 875 911 2.70 ha 3507 trees	2017/18 Week Dartington SX 778 624 0.3ha 100 trees	2017/18 Various small sites 0.70 ha 818 trees	2018/1 Hillcrest Longdown SX 875 911 0.90 ha 1140 trees	2017/18 Upcott Grange Farm Broadwoodwidge SX 384 916 4.08 ha 5425 trees	2018/19 Week Dartington SX 778 624 0.01 ha 28 trees
2018/19 Howton Down SX 825 732 0.10 ha 150 trees	2018/19 Courtgate Orchard Harbourneford DNP SX715 623 0.75 ha 700 trees	2018/19 Rundlestone DNP SX576 749 0.85 ha 800 trees	2018/19 RAF St. Mawgan, Cornwall SW869 637 0.50 ha 1147 trees	2018/19 Various small sites 0.20 ha 186 trees	

59 sites!**92.81 ha!****91289
trees!**